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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#)
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009

Media Highlights: Afghanistan Elections; US Kingpin Act and PKK;
Debate Over PKK Returnees; PM Erdogan to US;
Turkish Businessman Having Hard Time for Producing Fake Parts;

"Second Round of Vote in Afghanistan" (Milliyet)
Media emphasize that President Hamid Karzai agreed to face a second round of voting in Afghanistan's disputed election after a UN-led fraud inquiry. In "Afghanistan will Go for the Second Round on Nov 7," Islamist-oriented Zaman notes the role of Senator Kerry and says "Karzai, who was rejecting a second round vote, is now convinced." Liberal Radikal headline reads, "Second Tour in Severe Winter," and opines, "US pressure, particularly the efforts by Sen John Kerry and the UN, played a role in Afghan President Karzai's reversal on the issue of a runoff election." Mainstream Aksam writes in, "Karzai Accepts Second Round," that "US Senator Kerry convinced Karzai to drop his objections to a run-off."

In a related story, papers highlight the details of yesterday's Turkish National Security Council meeting. In "Decree Highlighted at NSC," mainstream Sabah reports that the NSC confirmed in a statement following the meeting that Turkish troops in Afghanistan would not be involved in combating terrorists or participate in drug and mine searches - even after Turkey takes over the ISAF command in Kabul on November 1. Mainstream Hurriyet headlines that "Turkey Will Not be a Combatant Force" and claims that this message was delivered to the US after the meeting.

"The US Report that Dissolves the PKK" (Aksam)
Under the headline, "The Report that Dissolves the PKK," mainstream Aksam says on its front page that the US Treasury Department's "Kingpin" sanctions against three leading PKK members warns the group that "criminal activities cannot be covered by political rhetoric." The report, of which a copy was submitted to Turkish authorities, accuses PKK leaders Murat Karayilan, Ali Riza Altun and Zubeyir Aydar of narcotics trafficking to help fund the PKK. The report warns that the money the PKK gained through drug smuggling was "not safe." The report notes the PKK extorts money from the drug traffickers in Europe, and says the PKK's leaders take active role in the delivery of drugs to the Netherlands. "The PKK is engaged in an effort to legalize its organization around Europe, and began gaining millions of Euros through 'taxation' of the drugs that

come over Turkey," says the report.

Mainstream Star quotes State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly from his Oct. 20 briefing. Star reports that Kelly stressed the support the US gives to Turkey's territorial integrity, and said, "We support the efforts of our Turkish ally to overcome the PKK problem." The paper also quotes the deputy commander of the coalition forces in northern Iraq, General Robert Brown, as saying, "We do not see the PKK as a problem in the north of Iraq."

All PKK Returnees are Free

Today's papers gave extensive coverage to the release of all 34 PKK members who came from Qandil and Makhmour camp to Turkey. Mainstream Vatan quotes Interior Minister Besir Atalay saying that "the PKK terrorists returning home was a part of the plan of the government. The north of Iraq is not going to be a safe haven for them, they all know this. Initially, we expect that 100-150 more people to return." Liberal Radikal quotes PM Erdogan as saying "Is it possible not to be hopeful after the picture we saw yesterday at the Habur gate? Something is happening in Turkey, which gives us hope." Meanwhile, harsh reaction came from the opposition parties to the initiative. MHP Chairman Devlet Bahceli said during his party meeting: "Those who were met with applause were not pilgrims returning from Mecca. Nor were they Turkish expatriates who returned to their homeland after long years of hard work in foreign countries. They were not Turkish soldiers who represented their nation in other places with pride. They were treacherous terrorists who carry the blood of thousands of innocents babies, mothers, women and martyrs on their hands and weapons... with this initiative AKP surrendered to PKK, not PKK to Turkey." Main opposition party CHP

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leader said "We have started to understand what has been talked about recently. They keep talking about an initiative and a process. We have seen what is behind it. We understand why the process is being carried out secretly. We understand the reason why the DTP pointed to Ocalan as an interlocutor. We have seen that Ocalan's roadmap has been implemented. This is a project by the AKP, PKK and DTP."

Editorials on the return of the PKK groups

"Returnees and the Latest Picture" (Yeni Safak) Turkish pundits continue to make supportive comments on the returnees and aftermath. Some writers express concern about DTP's language and attitude, like Ali Bayramoglu in Islamist oriented Yeni Safak who writes today that: "Each time DTP members make a reference to Ocalan, the whole situation goes toward more conflict rather than peace." The writer hopes that DTP uses the 34 returnees and their release as "a good chance for peace." In mainstream Hurriyet Sedat Ergin finds the welcoming scenes of returnees "annoying" however he adds optimism. "While PKK Lays Down Arms": "If these scenes will ultimately lead to peace and tranquility, we can try to be hopeful." "Concrete Steps": Similarly Islamist oriented Zaman's Mustafa Unal says "there were some annoying visuals about the returnees but at the end of the day this is about peace at home."

Considering strong reaction from the two opposition parties, columnist Murat Yetkin thinks there is no chance for the government from now on to work for a constitutional amendment to encourage more on the Kurdish initiative. In liberal Radikal he wrote: "It is obvious that the government has to proceed thru decrees and regulations." One pessimistic scenario however comes from Islamist oriented Yeni Safak's writer Ibrahim Karagul. "Worrying About Turkey": Skeptical about warning coming from the Turkish intelligence units, he writes: "There is a strong possibility of undermining the ongoing initiatives thru creating chaos in the country. Turkish Intelligence is now warning about Islamist groups may be attacking Israeli and American targets in Turkey. Given the fact that similar chaotic attacks occurred in Iran and Pakistan previously by some American and British manipulated groups, this warning presents a big question mark."

Erdogan's Upcoming Visit to the US

Mainstream Milliyet headline reads "Erdogan First Goes to Iran and then to the US" and notes that PM Erdogan will be travelling to

Pakistan on October 24-25, to Iran on October 26-27 and then to the US. Due to Turkish Republic day, the PM was planning to postpone his trip to the US, originally scheduled for October 29> Milliyet reports that PM Erdogan said he did not receive an answer to his postponement request from the US yet. And, according to the paper, the PM added that if there is no other option, he can attend Obama's invitation on October 29.

Turkish businessman arrested over fake spare parts sold to US Defense Department
Mainstream Hurriyet reports from New York that New York based Turkish businessman Galip Dedekarginoglu was arrested for delivering to the US Defense Department "low quality and fake spare parts" produced in the businessman's factory in Turkey. Dedekarginoglu has New York Machinery LLC in New Jersey. Dedekarginoglu was accused of putting on the parts the logo of the original brand after producing them with cheap material. He was released on USD 500,000 of bail, but will be on trial with the demand of up to 20 years in prison each for five separate crimes, says Hurriyet.

Upcoming events:

Q October 21: Kazakhstan's President Nazarbayev comes to Turkey.
Q October 21: Foreign Minister Davutoglu will brief the parliament on the normalization protocols signed with Armenia.
Q October 24: President Gul will pay an official visit to Serbia, as

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reported

Q October 24-25: Prime Minister Erdogan will visit Pakistan, as reported
Q October 26-27: Prime Minister Erdogan will visit Iran, as reported

TV News (NTV and other channels)

Domestic

Q Istanbul Governor's Office said the swine flu outbreak has not reached Istanbul yet, but health officials say there were 235 cases in the city.
Q Health authorities have shut down all schools in the city of Diyarbakir following the outbreaks of swine flu.
Q Central bank governor Durmus Yilmaz said there was "partial improvement" in Turkish unemployment figures.

World

Q Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said recent talks with Turkish PM Erdogan focused on bilateral, regional and international issues, but stressed that Turkey cannot be a mediator in nuclear issues.
Q The Turkish Parliament's foreign relations committee will send a delegation comprised of AKP and MHP MPs to Baku at a time of strained relations with Azerbaijan.
Q Turkish flags removed from the Monument of Martyrs in Azerbaijan have been returned.
Q The association of Turkish Jews in Israel sent a letter to President Gul, PM Erdogan and FM Davutoglu, asking for taking off the air "Separation" series on TRT television.
JEFFREY